

CALIFORNIAN SPECIAL REPORT / SCOTT BARNES — HERO OR FLAKE?

intelligence gathering refuted



CASEY CHRISTIE / THE CALIFORNIAN

in Kern County Superior Court in February.

Barnes unsuccessfully fought his dismissal from the El Cajon police all the way to the appeals court, say Barnes was fired for brutality and lying.

"In January of 1977, I orally informed a representative of the El Cajon Police Department that from that time on the district attorney's office would not prosecute any cases on which Officer Barnes was primarily responsible for the recovery of evidence," William J. Howatt Jr., deputy San Diego County district attorney, wrote in a sworn declaration in Barnes' wrongful discharge suit against the city.

That decision was based on Barnes' "lack of credibility," wrote Howatt, now a Superior Court judge.

San Diego County District Attorney Ed Miller, in an interview, said recently that Barnes' subsequent "claims and actions seem to attest to the wisdom of Mr. Howatt's evaluation and determination of several years ago."

It was Miller, Barnes says in his book, who recruited Barnes into the undercover Biker Enforcement Team.

"I have to assume that passage is a product of Mr. Barnes' fertile imagination," Miller said in the interview.

"I do not personally know Scott Barnes from a load of tomatoes. To the best of my recollection, I have never met the man.

"At no time was Scott Barnes a member of the Biker Enforcement Team, overt or covert. His claim ... is ludicrous on its face," Miller said.

Jonathan Logan, the Kern County prosecutor who Barnes said knew of Barnes' undercover role, said he never met Barnes until Barnes was on trial on the taping charges.

In Ridgecrest, where Barnes was hired as a patrolman in March 1977, it didn't take long for him to make a name for himself.

In October 1977, he arrested a man for possession of a knife in a car. The man was released when a judge pointed out it is not illegal to have a knife in a car. The man later won a false arrest suit against Barnes and the city.

Another suspect, arrested by Barnes in a stabbing, was released when the district attorney's office recognized the knife booked into evidence was not the same knife used in the assault, court records show.

Barnes, on duty, shot and wounded a suspect Dec. 18, 1977. The man was accused of assaulting several officers, including Barnes, and ultimately was sent to a state mental hospital.

On Feb. 1, 1978, it was discovered that Barnes' bullets, taken from the body of the wounded man, were missing from the department's evidence locker. Two months later, Barnes said he discovered the bullets in a police department trash can.

On Feb. 14, 1978, China Lake Police Department Officer Billy Hill made an off-duty arrest of a shoplifter in Ridgecrest. He said Barnes, who was on duty, interfered with the arrest and destroyed evidence in the case.

Barnes said a sergeant told him to destroy the evidence. "I'd call that a lie," then-Police Chief Earl Fike told *The Ridgecrest Independent* at the time. Barnes was suspended from the department for his conduct in the case, and ultimately fired.

He told the Ridgecrest newspaper his suspension resulted from his investigation of outlaw motorcycle gangs.

"I feel there is a leak in the department," he told a reporter. "I don't trust them."

On Feb. 28, 1978, drug and weapons charges were dismissed against two Ridgecrest men—when a judge ruled Barnes had been mistaken when he said the car the two were in did not stop at a stop sign.

The supposed traffic violation was the reason Barnes stopped the car, and led to his discovery of a small quantity of marijuana and a gun. But other witnesses, not connected to the suspects, said the car did stop.

In March 1978, 25 of the 27 members of the Ridgecrest Police Employee Association voted to recommend Barnes be fired from the force. The association includes sworn officers, supervisors, dispatchers, secretaries and others.

In April 1978 Barnes was fired.

Appealing his dismissal, he said in a city hearing that other officers had spied on him and "ridiculed him," and that the police chief helped kill Barnes' investigation into illegal gambling in Ridgecrest.

Much of the departmental dissatisfaction with him, he said, stemmed from his continuing investigation of the Hell's Angels and Mongol motorcycle gangs that were trafficking drugs in Ridgecrest.

He lost his appeal and left town.

He doesn't mention his Ridgecrest Police Department dismissal in his book.

He says, in "BOHICA," that "thinking my assignment might be becoming too dangerous, my wife, Vickie, who was pregnant, and I decided in the summer of '78 to move north on the Pacific Coast to a little town called Crescent City."

In Crescent City, he says in "BOHICA," he knew the Hells Angels were after him. After his home was sprayed with machine gun fire he left town again.

But a year later he was back in the news, preparing to testify — for the defense — at a federal racketeering trial against the leaders of the San Francisco area Hells Angels.

His Jan. 11, 1981, testimony was stopped after about 15 minutes when it was ruled irrelevant, federal court records show.

He told reporters outside the courtroom that he had been an undercover police officer who quit law enforcement because he was disgusted with law enforcement techniques used against motorcycle gangs.

Court documents show he was prepared to testify that he and other undercover officers planted and manufactured evidence and instigated wars between rival motorcycle gangs. He held a news conference with Hells Angels President Sonny Barger.

A couple months later he was off to Southeast Asia on the POW rescue mission that is the focus of his book.

28,30 Jan 86

U.S. Senate Committee, Veterans' Affairs Testimony of Scott T. Barnes

I am SCOTT T. BARNES and hereby swear and affirm under penalty of perjury:

I currently am a citizen and resident of the State of California. I am married and have three children. I am currently employed as a college teacher and have been employed in that capacity for approximately four months. I have a date of birth of 19 June 1954 and have completed high school and five years of college. I have been honorably discharged from the United States Army.

I have experience in general law enforcement activities with particular emphasis in the area of intelligence and organized crime investigations over the approximate period of time beginning June 1975 through approximately January 1981. During that period of time I was employed by private police departments and worked for special law enforcement details. In approximately April 1981 while I was in Hawaii I was contacted by Hughes Aircraft on behalf of a man identified to me as Bo Gritz. Shortly after this I was contacted by a man who identified himself to me as LTC Bo Gritz. This initial contact was by telephone while I was still in Hawaii. I told LTC Gritz on this

40030/6006

21

40030/6006

22

000847

occasion that I would agree to introduce him to General Vang Pao who was known to me to be the Major General for the CIA-Laotian Forces who was then living in California. It was apparent to me at the time that the reason LTC Gritz contacted me was because I was able to introduce him to General Vang Pao.

My relationship with General Vang Pao by this time had been a close acquaintance. Shortly after this phone call from this man who identified himself as LTC Gritz I received a package which was personally delivered to me in Hawaii. COL Gritz had referenced this package in the phone call which I received from him earlier. The package arrived by a personal courier and contained intelligence documents pertaining to living American Prisoners of War in Laos, biographical sketches on LTC Gritz explaining who he was as well as a defense intelligence letter from General Aaron addressed to LTC James G. Gritz. The correspondence from General Aaron to LTC Gritz is attached as Exhibit A attached hereto. By this time it was my understanding after having these conversations with LTC Gritz, that I was being requested to accept his offer of employment to travel to Thailand to make preliminary arrangements to conduct an operation which had as its purpose the identification and extraction of living American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia and in particular Laos. After these initial contacts with LTC Gritz I attempted to establish whether or not this was a sanctioned activity by the

40030/6006

23

United States Government. In order to learn this I spoke with two officials of the Defense Intelligence Agency by telephone between Hawaii and Washington, D.C. I identified myself to them as well as the stated purpose of LTC Gritz's operation. These two individuals confirmed to me that COL Gritz's operation was "a chartered activity".

I was instructed by LTC Gritz to deliver a package to ANALYST the Commander of the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) in Bangkok, Thailand. The legitimacy of the Gritz's operation was also confirmed by two other activity duty full colonels who were at that time were assigned in Washington D.C. The reason that I contacted these people in Washington, D.C. and within the Defense Intelligence Agency was that I had been requested to do so by LTC Gritz in order to allow me to confirm the legitimacy of his intended operation.

I agreed to participate in this operation with LTC Gritz because of the interesting aspect of the exercise and because I was being offered a considerable amount of money to go along. In June of 1981 I left from Hawaii and went to Bangkok, Thailand. Previous instructions led me to a contact agent and I eventually made it to the United States Embassy in Bangkok. I spoke there with United States Embassy officials who confirmed to me that they were expecting to see me. At the instructions of LTC Gritz

40030/6006

24

000848

I delivered the package to the Commander of the JCRC in the United States Embassy in Bangkok. On this initial meeting I met with the Commander JCRC and other United States Government Intelligence Officials. All of these individuals identified themselves to me. Some were active duty United States Army Military Intelligence and some were intelligence employees of the US Embassy in Bangkok. It was obvious by the manner of our conversation and their discussions with me that they expected my arrival as the package from LTC Gritz. During this initial meeting which lasted approximately 2 to 3 hours I learned that it had been confirmed that there were living American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia. Four specific files were identified to me and I was told that "these are the people we are concerned with on this mission" by the Commander of JCRC. I was also told that every effort was to be made to discredit a man named PFC Robert Garwood at this meeting. Prior to this occasion I had never met or heard of any of the names which were identified. Also at this first meeting I was informed that the purpose of the Gritz's operation was to send in a ground reconnaissance team to confirm the existence of at least two Caucasians in Laos and I learned that the Gritz's operation was responsible for the ground reconnaissance confirmation.

40030/6006

25

I was then given instructions by the commander of the JCRC to travel south of Aranyaprathet, Thailand with an agent who would take me to a Khmer Rouge Camp in order to deliver another package there in Cambodia for the Commander of JCRC. It was my understanding at the time that this was an on going part of the Bo Gritz operation. At this time I was being primarily used as a courier and believe now that it was being done to test my reliability. I was also instructed that Task Force 80 would arrange to let me through into Cambodia with my contact agent. I did as I was instructed and traveled with this contact agent into Cambodia and into a Khmer Rouge Camp. I was there for approximately three hours and while I was there I saw American made weapons such as light anti-tank weapons, automatic weapons and others. This was the first and last time I had been in Cambodia. I delivered a package to the Khmer Rouge Camp and returned back to the United States Embassy Bangkok and JCRC where I was debriefed and again discussed what had transpired with the same individual mentioned above.

Following this I traveled back to the United States to California and there met with LTC Gritz, personally, for the first time. He identified himself to me, requested me to introduce him to General Vang Pao. Following this I received monetary compensation from LTC Gritz and he showed me a great deal more money in his home in Westchester, California. He again

40030/6006

26

000849

asked to me introduce him to General Vang Pao and introduced me to other members of his team. I was introduced as the only man among the team who had any contact with General Vang Pao. Eventually I did as requested and did introduce him to General Vang Pao. This happened in California at which time General Vang Pao expressed concern that LTC Gritz was heading an official United States Government mission which caused him concern because previous information had been given by General Vang Pao to the United States Government and it had not been utilized.

Consequently in order to convince General Vang Pao that this was not an official mission by the United States Government a meeting was set up with an aide to Congressman Robert Dornan, a United States Congressman, in his offices in Los Angeles. General Vang Pao was assured by LTC Gritz that his operation was privately funded and not an official operation of the United States Government. These discussions to convince General Vang Pao that this was a private operation took place on or about the 26th of August 1981 as evidenced by Exhibit B attached hereto which is a sign-in ledger from Congressman Dornan's office evidencing that this meeting took place between LTC Gritz and General Vang Pao on this particular date. Eventually the operation was continued because it had received the blessing of General Vang Pao who was convinced that this is not an official

exercise of the United State Government. I along with three other members of this team traveled to Bangkok carrying a considerable amount of military equipment which included Hughes Aircraft and Litton Industries radio equipment, camera equipment, recording devices, high powered binoculars, and cryptographic equipment. The other three members of this team who traveled with me were under the command of LTC Gritz. No one was in uniform and when we arrived on Flight #1, Pan American Airlines, we were quietly escorted through customs directly to the hotels where we stayed preliminarily in Bangkok. We were met by representatives from the United States Embassy one of whom was escorted by two armed United States Marine Guards. Attached at Exhibit C to my affidavit are business cards which we utilized as a cover during this operation to establish the fact that we were in fact a private mission rather than one from the United States Government. Also attached at Exhibit D to this affidavit is one copy of my United States passport and visa showing entry and departure to Bangkok on or about 15 June 1981 and 25 June 1981 respectively. This was the period of time that I entered into Cambodia via Thailand. At Exhibit E is a copy of my United States passport and visa entry showing my second trip to Thailand on or about 21 October 1981 and departure on or about 3 November 1981.

000850

We were then instructed by a United States Embassy Official whose name is known to me that we were to immediately depart to the northeast quadrant of Thailand. Prior to arriving at Udorn and while in Bangkok I was shown weapons which were to be used by the Gritz's ground reconnaissance team. These consisted of AR 180 automatic weapons with teflon ammunition. We were flown to Udorn Airbase on Thai Airways and met there with a Thai military escort. We then traveled to NKP, Thailand. Eventually we made contact with agents identified to us as representatives of General Vang Pao who at the time were indigenous guerrillas. I crossed into Laos with another American who identified himself as Mike J. Baldwin and approximately 30 indigenous individuals. The purpose of this operation was according to my understanding to confirm or deny the previous intelligence reports of the exact location of living American POWs in Laos. To the best of my recollection we traveled approximately 27 kilometers east into Laos into the Mahaksi region. We eventually arrived at a triangular shaped prison camp on approximately the 21st of October of 1981. From the elevation of where we were located we were able to look down at an angle to the area of the prison camp. We remained at this location for approximately 15 to 30 minutes and while there observed peasants, guards in towers and two men who were clearly Caucasian. These men were observed by myself through the photographic and telephoto lenses which we

40030/6006

29

were using at the time. The men were white skinned, wearing shirts and trousers and because of their size and skin color were clearly Caucasian. The approximate distance which we were from these individuals was 600 feet but I emphasize that this is an approximation only. At this same time approximately 400 rapid-exposure photographs were taken in order to confirm the existence of these Caucasian. Once the confirmation was made we immediately left this location and returned to Thailand. I returned to NKP, Thailand and the other American who was with me (identified above) returned to Thailand through a different route. Upon my arrival back to Thailand at NKP I was met by the other three members of COL Gritz's team. By that time LTC Gritz had been fired from his position as commander of this operation for reasons unknown to me at the time. However, when I arrived at NKP I was met by these other three members of his team that I traveled to Thailand with and I was then informed that we had received communication from the United States Embassy and another communication came over the DOE telex that if the presence of Caucasian was confirmed at this location that the "merchandise was to be liquidated". The support operations which had been previously arranged to make an extraction had been cancelled without explanation. I confirmed to the other three members of the team that I was with that I saw the two Caucasians. I refused to participate in this operation further,

40030/6006

30

000851

mailed the photographs which I took back to the United States to a pre-designated address. I immediately returned back to the United States.

After I left NKP and returned to the United States I have no personal knowledge concerning whether the mission was continued and comple

This ____ ay of January, 1986.

SCOTT BARNES

Witnesses:

40030/6006

31

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

16 November 1985

SUBJECT: 16 November 1985, 1500 hours, phonecon from Scott Barnes to DATA (AN)

Scott phoned DATA and requested to speak with General Paris (sic) ((i.e., Lt Gen Perroots)) or General Shufelt (sic). He said he had been referred to these two generals at this phone number by an "active duty agent of the Central Intelligence Agency," "who does not want his name given unless this develops into formal hearings;" and by two other persons:

- Dr. Christopher Gugas (phonetic), whom Scott identified as a retired CIA AGENT; and,
- Monica Jensen (phonetic), whom Scott identified as a producer for CBS 60 Minutes who was doing a special report on the PW/MIA issue.

Scott implied, somewhat ambiguously, that he was acting in response to a phone call he "received from a man named Eugene Tighe" who instructed him to "handle this on the QT," and not reveal his (Scott's) information to anyone except Generals Perroots or Shufelt. Scott declined to explain the purpose of his call, except to make some disjointed remarks to the effect that a supposed quarrel between CIA and DIA about Scott's information made it necessary to deal only with certain officials such as these two Generals.

Scott said he could be reached by phone at DATA *all weekend, since he was "baby sitting."

I told Scott I would pass his message to the appropriate officials.

Immediately after the call I telephoned the NMIC Team Chief, NAME , and alerted him that Scott might phone the NMIC, possibly using an alias such as Steve Beekle. In the event Scott should use an alias, as he has done on a previous occasion, I passed on a summary of the above to help recognize the caller. I explained that no action was required by the NMIC, that I was passing the information solely as a courtesy in the event Scott phones the NMIC. I also cautioned the NMIC that Scott is an activist who is involved in some type of suit against the CIA and the Smith/McIntire court action; and recommended that if Scott phones to be polite, receptive and non-committal.

COMMENT: Despite the fact that Scott telephoned me at this number in the past (I gave him the number following his previous call to the NMIC under the alias Steve Beckle), and the fact that I identified myself and the office previously and during this phonecon, Scott feigned that he had acquired the number from an U/I CIA official and that he (Scott) did not know whether the number belonged to an office of the DIA.

000852

32